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GOING TO THE EXPERTS

How KPCC turned to parents when redesigning
its early childhood education and
development coverage.

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Elena, parent

INTRODUCTION

How KPCC is adapting to serve new audiences

KPCC (Southern California Public Radio) is an innovative public service newsroom dedicated to providing Southern California communities with high-quality news and information. Every day, our journalists help audiences catch up on the latest headlines, explore the complexities of life in Southern California, and connect curious communities with one another.

Yet as we report on key issues like early childhood education and development (ECED), the media environment in which we operate is shifting dramatically. We know that we must try new approaches in order to engage and better serve Southern Californians. It's imperative we reach diverse audiences: Roughly half the population in Los Angeles County is nonwhite; about 6 percent is 5 years old or younger.

To fulfill KPCC's mission, we must continue to innovate by designing our coverage in new ways so that we can reach audiences in their daily lives—where they live and how they consume information—and provide a public service unavailable anywhere else.

In 2012, KPCC hired a reporter to focus on the first five years of life. The goal: to examine how access to education in the early years affects outcomes later in life, including but not limited to incarceration rates, income, and career opportunities. KPCC was progressive in this approach. Most education reporting focuses on K–12, despite the evidence that 85 percent of brain development occurs in the first three years.



Priska Neely, KPCC's senior early childhood reporter

We built expertise in the emerging science of brain development and examined the availability and affordability of childcare as well as how current public policy syncs up (or fails) to meet the needs of caregivers. We delivered this information through broadcast, digital stories, and in-person events. By all measures, our work has been successful. In the beat's first six years, KPCC's effectively reached key policy makers and stakeholders in the early childcare community with more than 830 stories and won more than a dozen awards along the way. There was demonstrated impact at the individual, network, and institutional levels.

We also saw a major shift in the public dialogue around early childhood issues. When we began our coverage in 2012, the conversation focused on whether preschool was effective. In 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom describes himself as a fanatic about early childhood issues and says improving care and education for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers is a top priority for the world's fifth-largest economy.

KPCC now seeks to build deeper relationships with community members who could benefit from our service yet are underserved by public media: low- and middle-income parents and caretakers of young children in Los Angeles County. While KPCC reaches roughly 1 million people each month, that does not represent the full range of Angelenos who most need this information.

In order to reach those most in need, we've launched a new strategy that will allow us to go deeper, identifying the information needs, concerns, and problems these parents and caregivers face every day. This requires changing our approach and embracing experimentation so that we might better understand and meet the information needs of these parents and caregivers. What follows is a report on what we've tried so far, early results, and learnings.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project seeks to answer whether KPCC's journalism can be useful to communities outside of our traditional distribution channels. Is there reporting we could do that would meaningfully engage more caregivers of children ages 0–5 in L.A. County? How would we define success, and how do we need to modify our approach to be effective?

There is urgency in answering these questions as Governor Newsom has made early childhood education a legislative priority. KPCC is in a unique position to hold government officials accountable. There is an opportunity to connect caregivers who live and breathe our early childhood system with academics, researchers, and policy makers to reveal gaps between the two and shine a light on what's working (or not).



The research team, from top: Kristen Muller, Ashley Alvarado, Priska Neely, Tran Ha, Jane Jozefowicz, and Natalie El-Hai.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

To better understand the information needs and habits of those KPCC aims to serve with its ECED coverage, we turned to design thinking.

Design thinking is a methodology for solving complex problems that forces you to identify actual problems before offering solutions. As Jennifer Brandel, the cofounder of the engaged journalism platform Hearken, has written, "At its most basic, design thinking is an agile process for solving complex problems. It's a way of understanding the needs of the people you're building a solution for, and testing that solution with them before creating it."

For this research, we employed a human-centered design approach (a form of design thinking), which emphasizes deep listening. The team consisted of chief content officer Kristen Muller, community engagement director Ashley Alvarado, early childhood reporter Priska Neely, human-centered design expert Tran Ha, and interns Jane Jozefowicz and Natalie El-Hai.

Based on our previous work with early childhood coverage, we selected a target audience of L.A. County parents and caregivers of children ages 0–5 and a goal of expanding and deepening our public service journalism,

Before launching the research, each member of the team had different ideas about what sort of outcome could be useful to parents and caregivers: an app that would help caregivers locate affordable, quality childcare, partnering with ethnic media to distribute the journalism we already produce, and distributing stories in preschools.

But we didn't know whether our ideas would be useful to the community we were trying to serve. We needed to first make sure we were identifying the right problem(s) before spending time brainstorming solutions.

We launched a five-step process:

- 1. Development of stakeholder map and target characteristics**
- 2. Stakeholder interviews**
- 3. Synthesis**
- 4. Brainstorming**
- 5. Development of potential prototypes**

DEVELOPMENT OF STAKEHOLDER MAP AND TARGET CHARACTERISTICS

The most effective ideas are most likely to come from stakeholders. In the case of early childhood education and development coverage, that means people who spend a significant part of their day engrossed in early childhood development—as parents, caregivers, childcare providers, or otherwise.

We needed to better understand their wants and needs,

Based on Neely's previous reporting and expertise in the ECED field, we developed a list of stakeholders.

As we mapped these stakeholders (pictured: top right corner), we started to identify shared experiences or characteristics and we were able to see categories emerging.

Based on our goal going in, we prioritized parents, family members, and other caregivers, including professionals.

What had started as a very long list became manageable.

Working with Ha, we developed a list of target characteristics (pictured: righthand column) that would allow us—with the target audience of parents and caregivers of children 0–5 years old in Los Angeles County—to interview stakeholders with a wide range of experiences.



PARENT TARGET PROFILES

- *Has child/children 0-3 years old*
- *Has child/children 3-5 years old*
- *KPCC listener*
- *KPCC non-listener*
- *High school or no high school diploma*
- *Masters or PhD*
- *Black*
- *White*
- *Undocumented*
- *Spanish speaking*
- *Speaks non-dominant primary language*
- *Lives in incorporated city in L.A. County*
- *Lives in unincorporated area in L.A. County*
- *Lives downtown*
- *Lives in suburbs*
- *Takes public transportation as main mode of transport*
- *Drives as main mode of transport*
- *Lives close/far from freeway*

CAREGIVER TARGET PROFILES

- *In-home daycare*
- *Drop-off daycare*
- *Relative who provides primary care for child*



Ashley Alvarado interviews Janet, a Pasadena preschool teacher.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Traditionally, when journalists are on deadline, we ask subjects very direct questions that need a precise answer. Human-centered design, on the other hand, employs more open-ended questions like “What do you worry about when it comes to your children?” and “If you had more time in the day, how would you use it?” as well as the observation of body language. This is to draw out implicit needs, in addition to explicit ones.

Explicit needs are what we can see: our conscious decisions and behaviors that we can observe and discuss. Implicit needs lie below the surface, and include emotions, values, and beliefs. Implicit needs are harder to observe, but they often provide deeper insight and focus. By approaching our interviews in this fashion, we aimed to step back, drop our assumptions, and immerse ourselves in the environment of those we are aiming to serve.

We went in looking for insights that could help point the way toward solutions. This approach is different from traditional research, focus groups, and engagement activities. Target profiles were carefully identified through research and Neely’s experiences in the field.

Interviews took place in interview subjects’ homes or workplace. Observing their behavior in their natural context helped us better understand what commands their attention throughout the day...and where and when we might fit into their routines. [Continued on page 8.]

INTERVIEWS: WHAT WE HEARD

The interviews were conducted in person across L.A. County; they usually lasted 45 minutes to an hour. Once all of the interviews were completed, we spent three days focused on sense-making: looking for patterns, themes, and meaning in what we had heard and observed so that we might identify actionable insights and frameworks. Here is some of what we heard:

"I overwork a lot of times.

*It brought me to tears
when I realized this."*

—Denise, **in-home
daycare provider**

*"The force of money
can move you beyond
borders."*

—Janet, **preschool
teacher**

*"If you know something
or have advice, I'd really
appreciate."*

—Berenice, **relative with
temporary custody**

*"When my baby's sick,
the first person I call is
my grandmother in
Mexico."*

—Elena, **parent**

*"[My wife] does the
research, and I agree
with her."*

—Justus, **parent**



From left, Kristen Muller, Priska Neely, Tran Ha, and Ashley Alvarado (not pictured) analyze the interviews, looking for patterns and opportunities.

SYNTHESIS

Once all of the stakeholder interviews had been conducted, we worked with human-centered design specialist Tran Ha over the course of three days to identify patterns and themes in the interviews and observations.

This synthesis is critical.

It allowed us to identify archetypes within our target audience as well as key insights that will drive our next phase of early childhood education and development reporting and engagement, including the development and testing of prototypes.

SYNTHESIS: THE ARCHETYPES

During the synthesis process, we identified and developed four archetypes.



Conspicuous Consumer

Likely part of KPCC's existing reach, the Conspicuous Consumer needs information to feed curiosity, improve quality of life, and reinforce world views.



Conscientious Caregiver

Less likely to be a regular KPCC listener, the Conscientious Caregiver needs information to inform their mission-driven work in the early childhood sector or to navigate the services designed for parents and caregivers.



Busy Bootstrapper

Completely outside of KPCC's existing reach, the Busy Bootstrapper needs information to survive and connect to resources.



Passive Follower

Unlikely to be a regular KPCC listener, the Passive Follower has experienced financial insecurity but not so much as to search out information in the way the Busy Bootstrapper does. She is more likely to be English dominant and to have spent the majority—if not all—of her life in the United States.



Justus and his wife, Liz, along with their 4-month-old daughter.

SYNTHESIS: KEY INSIGHTS

During the synthesis process, we identified new principles that will guide our work moving forward.

Formal and informal networks play an important role in collecting and disseminating information.

These networks include churches, public libraries, teacher associations, playgrounds, Facebook groups, families, and friends.

Many parents are worried about their kids' long-term futures instead of 0–5.

Parents of children 0–3 discussed anxiety about their children's long-term future while parents of children 3–5 focused on more immediate needs like performance in school.

Some face an additional learning curve and burden to navigate the early childhood education and development system to qualify for or take advantage of resources.

Many parents—especially those with limited English—detailed the challenges they faced in trying to access early childhood services for their children: from confirming eligibility for certain programs to the transportation required to participate.

SYNTHESIS: WHAT WE LEARNED

We cannot rely solely on radio, social media, or English-language media.

KPCC recognizes the greatest opportunity to expand its reach and deepen its impact in a meaningful way is with the Busy Bootstrapper and Conscientious Caregiver archetypes.

To really tap into the networks and informal distribution models we know exist, we must do much of this work in person. We cannot rely on our radio and digital platforms. At the same time, we cannot—and will not—stop doing the journalism that serves the Conspicuous Consumer. This is not a technology solution. Instead, it is low tech and high touch.

KPCC is particularly well positioned to carry out this work because of our longtime commitment to reporting on early childhood education and development and to engaged journalism practices (including but not limited to in-person events, community listening, and sourcing). We have established connections throughout the early childhood space and are skilled at in-person facilitation, producing live events, and engaging people where they are.

In January, KPCC hired its first-ever engagement producer dedicated to early childhood education and development. Over the next two years, we will conduct a series of experiments with the aforementioned prototypes and share learnings as we go.



Stefanie Ritoper **Engagement Producer**

Before joining KPCC, Ritoper spent more than 10 years supporting civic engagement through media in mission-driven organizations, including Evo Health and Wellness, the UCLA Labor Center, and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy. Ritoper was also the founding producer and host of “Re:Work,” a storytelling show about work. She holds a master’s degree in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Ritoper is a native Angeleno and spends most of her free time relearning everything she thought she knew about life from her toddler.



KPCC staff members joined the core research team to reflect on key insights and opportunities, brainstorming potential news sources based on these findings.

BRAINSTORMING

Drawing on the archetypes and key insights developed during the synthesis phase, KPCC journalists and non-journalist staffers gathered to brainstorm potential news services and distribution models that could reach the target ECED audience.

Staffers were asked to answer questions like "How might we think about ECED stories and information in formats beyond radio and web?" and "How might we engage with and build awareness among informal gatekeepers not familiar with KPCC? Of the potential news services identified during the brainstorm session, we have selected three ideas to prototype and develop as community-engaged news products (CNPs).

Prototypes at a glance:

- Printed fliers in libraries and parks
- Early childhood community ambassador program
- Children's book club at public libraries

DEVELOPMENT OF POTENTIAL PROTOTYPES: 3 COMMUNITY-ENGAGED NEWS PRODUCTS

The fifth step of this process was to develop the prototypes, or community-engaged news products, that we would test out.



1. PRINTED FLIERS IN LIBRARIES AND PARKS

Throughout the interview process, parents and caregivers cited fliers and postcards as sources of critical information—whether they were spotted at a local public library, park, or mailbox.

We have already begun to prototype this by distributing informational postcards (pictured above) that shared information about KPCC's reporting series on black infant mortality and promoted a January KPCC In Person event called "Racism and Reproduction: What Black Women Need to Know." For more information, see page 16.



Based on the key insights that "Formal and informal networks play an important role in collecting and disseminating information" and "Some face an additional learning curve and burden to navigate the early childhood education and development system to qualify for or take advantage of resources," KPCC has begun prototyping paper materials through informal partnerships and direct mail. We are also experimenting with in-language materials.



This prototype is specifically designed to reach those we would identify as belonging to the Conscientious Caregiver and Busy Bootstrapper archetypes.

2. EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



This type of framework is meant to encourage a sense of shared ownership in the newsgathering and distribution processes.

Building on the engagement and journalism KPCC has already done, the early childhood community ambassador program will regularly convene stakeholders in the communities where they live, not only distributing information but more importantly surfacing the needs and issues they're facing.

The convenings will be designed to foster small-group conversations and build trust between communities and KPCC journalists. Within the facilitation design, the emphasis will be on deeper listening and participation among all attendees.

They will also serve as an opportunity to identify other nontraditional distribution models.



Based on the key insights "Formal and informal networks play an important role in collecting and disseminating information" and "Many parents are worried about their kids' long-term futures instead of 0–5," KPCC will regularly convene stakeholders to surface specific needs and stories we may be missing, as well as leverage points to activate interest in coverage.



This prototype is designed to facilitate connection with and better understand the needs of all four archetypes. While each has a different degree of familiarity with KPCC, this prototype allows KPCC journalists to better understand and meet the information needs of each through deep engagement.



3. CHILDREN'S BOOK CLUB AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The children's book club prototype leverages KPCC's existing relationships with the local library system as well as listeners across Southern California.

We will turn to KPCC's existing audience members across radio, website, social media, and in-person platforms to crowdsource children's books that can be read at a series of facilitated community story times.

Working alongside the library system, KPCC will not only produce the events but also table at them in order to distribute key informational and branded materials.

We believe that KPCC's expertise in producing live events uniquely positions us to offer compelling book club story times that will engage parents and children, increasing parents' familiarity with us and building trust.

This has the potential to build on and to support the Early Childhood Community Ambassador Program prototype.



Based on the key insight that "Formal and informal networks play an important role in collecting and disseminating information," KPCC has begun looking at ways in which we could leverage our existing relationships and those of parents and caregivers with public libraries to meet people where they are.



This prototype is specifically designed to reach those we would identify as belonging to the Conspicuous Consumer, Conscientious Caregiver, and Busy Bootstrapper archetypes.



AN EARLY WIN

A January 2019 event served as case study for initial prototype testing

Based on the results of our human-centered design research, KPCC saw an immediate opportunity to implement one of the prototypes: the use of paper materials as a distribution method. This predated the hire of Stefanie Ritoper as engagement producer.

With Priska Neely's January 24 event focused on the black infant mortality, we identified a target audience of African American women in their early childbearing years (this is a segment of the population deeply affected by the mortality crisis and one largely outside of KPCC's traditional radio audience; African Americans represent roughly 8 percent of our listenership). We set the goal of having an audience of at least 100 people that was majority African American.

Nearly 6,000 informational postcards were distributed via direct mail to residents in neighborhoods with high rates of infant mortality and shared by health organizations. Printed fliers (pictured, opposite page) were displayed at an L.A. County Library branch near the venue, and digital fliers were shared by various organizations.

The results demonstrate a clear early win: more than 400 people registered for the event. Despite a trend toward higher attrition rates, roughly 200 people attended the program. More than 90 percent presented as black women, including high school students, grandmothers, medical professionals, and others.

An early review of the website analytics indicates that about 330 unique visitors came to the black infant mortality landing page from the unique URL. Roughly 51 percent of people who RSVP'd said they had heard about the event in a way other than our traditional outreach model.

The conversation was informative, with the host and panelists sharing a mix of advice and personal experiences.

Audience feedback (in-person and online) was extremely positive.

On Twitter, Isabeth Mendoza wrote, "So much community & love at 'Racism & Reproduction: what black women need to know.'" Twitter user @HeyImIvanna described the evening as "an eye-opening event."

As part of the post-event survey, one attendee wrote, "The speakers were great and diverse in their professions and experiences. The questions raised were very enlightening and the audience was able to engage the speakers."



RACISM + REPRODUCTION

WHAT BLACK WOMEN NEED TO KNOW

Black babies in the United States are far less likely than white babies to reach life's simplest milestones: to form words, to learn to crawl, to take their first steps.

That's because black babies born in the United States are two times more likely to die before their first birthday than white babies. The numbers are even worse in Los Angeles, where black babies are three times more likely than white babies to die in their first year of life. A growing body of research suggests the root cause is a social one, and the suspected assailant is chronic stress brought on by being a black woman in this country.

Join KPCC In Person and KPCC-LAist reporter Priska Neely and a panel of guests on January 24 as they share personal stories and information women can use to empower themselves — in and outside of the doctor's office — to improve outcomes for their babies and themselves.

JANUARY 24 • 7 P.M.
LA84, 2141 W. ADAMS BLVD., LOS ANGELES
RSVP: KP.CC/BLACKBABIES



Opposite page: So many people attended the January event that an overflow space was opened. This page, from top: The informational flier that was distributed, a young audience member asks a question.

RESEARCH & DESIGN PHASE EVALUATION

Measuring the success of KPCC's research and implementation of the identified prototypes.



RESEARCH AND DESIGN OBJECTIVES

As we entered into the research and design phases of our ECED reporting project, KPCC identified three main objectives:

1. Learn the identified community's needs, focusing on:

- Understanding the topics and issues of most interest as well as the preferred or convenient delivery formats and engagement methods.
- Understanding what is already being done by other organizations in the field to meet these needs.
- Identifying what KPCC as a local news organization can uniquely provide.

2. Design an editorial strategy to test, including:

- Identifying potential news product(s) specifically designed for low- and middle-income parents, families, and caregivers of young children.
- Identifying a distribution pipeline(s) and engagement tool(s) that allow us to serve a community traditionally underserved by media.

3. Develop a report on information learned during the research phase for distribution to journalism organizations, service organizations, and the philanthropic community.

FINAL RESEARCH OUTCOMES

The following pages include the research, analysis, prototyping, and sharing activities that KPCC proposed as we headed into the research and design phase as well as the actual outcomes and measures.

Research Activities

Proposed Activities

- ☒ Hire human-centered design specialist
- ☒ Identify 3 in-community informal partner organizations to facilitate introductions to community members
Outcome: We worked with multiple in-community informal partner organizations (including First 5 LA, Long Beach Forward, and Children Today) to facilitate introductions to stakeholders
- ☐ Either through partner organizations or services like Exact Data, purchase cell phone numbers for community members
Outcome: We chose not to do this.
- ☒ Implement direct mail strategies in specific communities
Outcome: Implemented direct mail strategies in specific communities like Inglewood
- ☐ Hold in-community Feeding the Conversations engagement-sourcing gatherings utilizing facilitation techniques and methodologies to surface needs
Outcome: We chose not to do this.

Proposed Outputs

- ☒ Create 3–5 types of survey materials (postcard, text message, digital)
Outcome: During research we focused on in-person interviews. When prototyping printed materials, we created two types of digital surveys (at time of RSVP and post event) and tracked URLs as another way to survey behavior of target audience
- ☒ Develop 3–5 archetypes representing potential community members served
Outcome: Developed 4 archetypes
- ☒ Develop a list of no more than 5 issues and topics of interest
Outcome: Developed 3 key insights (takes the place of key topics or issues as identified in research proposal)
- ☒ Develop a list of no more than 3 potential delivery formats
Outcome: Developed multiple delivery formats, including but not limited to direct mail, fliers in public libraries and parks, and in-person events.

Expected Outcomes

- ☒ Specific archetypes have been identified for KPCC to build content around
- ☒ A wide range of needs and opportunities specific to the community members are identified
- ☒ Several options for news products to pilot are identified, including the potential formats, delivery mechanisms, issues and topics
- ☒ The community has been intentionally involved in productive conversation to imagine the most effective coverage

Black babies in
LA County are
three times as
likely as white
babies to die
before their
first birthday.



**RACISM + REPRODUCTION:
WHAT BLACK WOMEN NEED TO KNOW**
RSVP FREE: WWW.KPCC.ORG/BLACKBABIES
JANUARY 24 • 7 P.M. • LA84 • 2141 W. ADAMS BLVD., L.A.



Printed fliers were identified as the first prototype that would be produced as a community-news engaged product. Ahead of a January 2019 event, fliers were distributed to a local library branch. Thousands of postcards (pictured) were also distributed via direct mail.

Data Analysis

Proposed Activities

- ✓ Synthesize data through multiday work sessions
- ✓ Compare the range of needs with what journalism is equipped to help solve
Outcome: Compared the range of needs with what KPCC newsroom was equipped to help solve; identified the need for a full-time engagement producer position to support ECED reporting

Proposed Outputs

- ✓ Create list of patterns and themes
- ✓ Break down those issues and opportunities where KPCC journalists could help fill the gap
- ✓ Identify those issues that could be addressed with a community and/or journalism partner

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Specific potential information and delivery problems we are trying to solve are identified
Outcome: While KPCC entered the research phase with the assumption that there would be a high-tech solution, it became clear we needed low-tech, high-touch solutions that reached people where they are (often outside of KPCC's traditional reach)
- ✓ Several specific community-engaged news products are identified
Outcome: Three prototypes identified as community-engaged news products (CNP's)
- ✓ Move into design and prototyping phase with clear focus on issues, delivery types to pilot

Pretotyping and Prototyping

"Pretotyping" is a precursor to prototyping; it's a way to test an idea quickly and inexpensively to see whether the premise that "If we build it, they will use it" is correct.

Proposed Activities

- ✓ Pretotyping potential CNPs to test the initial appeal and actual usage to learn if people will be interested in it
Outcome: Pretotyped then prototyped printed fliers in libraries and parks idea with January event on black infant mortality (see page 16)
- ✓ Prototyping potential CNPs to test our actual ability to make the product, and adjusting as needed

Proposed Outputs

- ✓ No more than 3 pretotypes are developed, tested, qualified or disqualified
- ✓ 1–2 prototype(s) are developed and tested
Outcome: Tested fliers at libraries as well as postcards that were distributed via direct mail to neighborhoods experiencing higher rates of black infant mortality
- ✓ Ongoing surveys are conducted, asking questions of community members about the CNPs
Outcome: Surveying people who RSVP'd and attended event at time of registration and following event

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ The first CNP we will produce and test is determined
Outcome: Postcards and fliers identified as first CNP
- ✓ Scorecard for early success of the CNP is developed, with 3–5 key metrics determined
- ✓ Production of CNP commences

Sharing

Proposed Activities

- ✓ Write, present, and share a public report

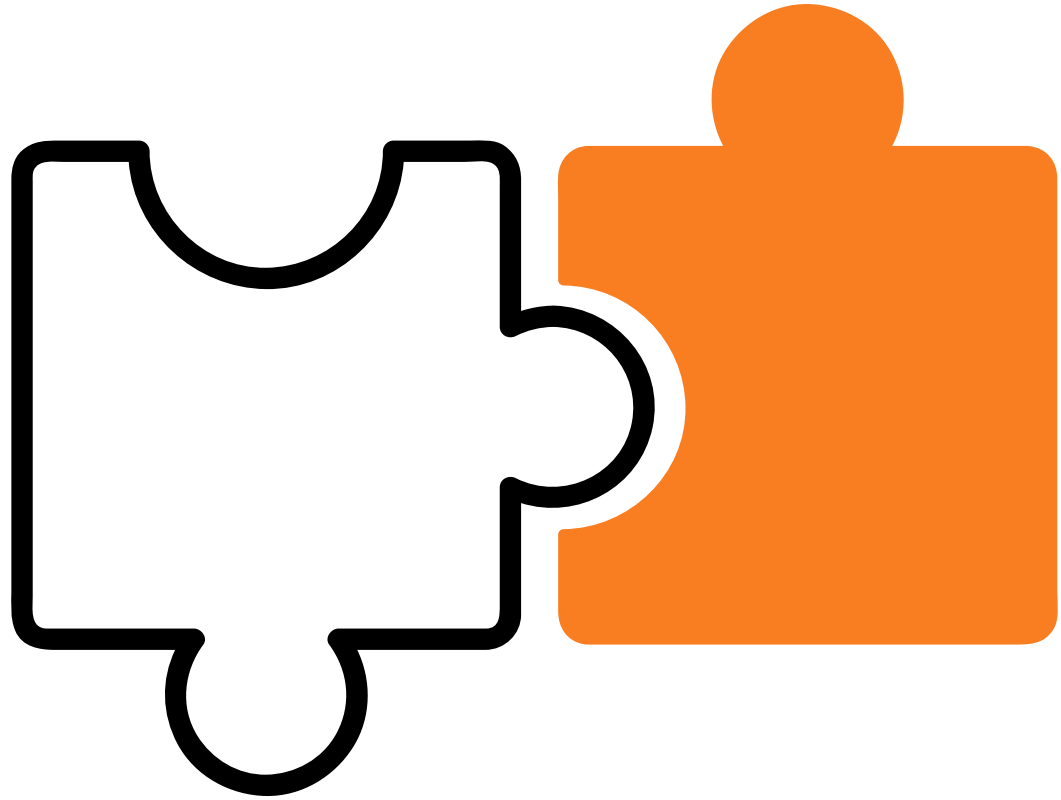
Proposed Outputs

- ✓ Produce public report on findings to date and next steps
- ✓ Attend conferences, panel discussions, summits, or other events, where appropriate, to share our learnings
Outcome: KPCC has already begun presenting on this human-centered design research at schools and with other journalists

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Information on the specific community's needs are available to various stakeholders
- ✓ Information about our editorial strategy and planning process model is available to other journalism organizations

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



Implementation Strategy

1. Through iteration and continually monitoring performance, test the editorial strategy of the community-engaged news product designed to meet the identified community's information needs by:
 - a. Developing the specific news product(s) designed for parents, families, and caregivers (examples below).
 - b. Distributing the news product(s) through identified pipelines.
 - c. Evaluating impact by measuring the output, level of community engagement, and outcomes.
2. Focus on meeting the identified community's needs by remaining aware, regularly adapting, and changing tactics, if necessary:
 - a. Only produce news products that the community is using, and not produce those that it is not.
 - b. Only distribute on platforms where we see evidence of useful consumption.
 - c. Engage in ways that attract participation and build the community.
3. Through transparency, seek out evidence of outcomes for the project, as well as potential impacts currently unknowable, and welcome opportunities for us and our partners to learn and improve.

Community-Engaged News Product(s) Scorecards

We will measure important qualitative and quantitative data including reach, geographic location, demographics, consumption, attention, referral sources, and devices/platforms. Below are metrics by which we will measure the success of news products we have identified to prototype.

Printed Fliers in Libraries and Parks

Planned Activities

- ☐ Fliers and postcards as ads for events
- ☐ Fliers as distribution for stories and information
- ☐ Fliers as asks for input on stories

Planned Outputs

- ☐ 35 percent of attendees RSVP through fliers
- ☐ At least 50 percent of fliers are consumed by target audiences (as reported by distribution partners)
- ☐ Generate at least 3 actionable leads for reporting

Planned Outcomes and Measures

- ☐ Attendees sign up for newsletter, follow Priska Neely on social media, RSVP for another event, provide a tip for our reporting
- ☐ Readers signal interest in learning more (digital and SMS signup options listed on printed materials)
- ☐ Stories have higher reach and engagement time

Early Childhood Community Ambassador Program

Planned Activities

- ☐ 8-12 in-person Feeding the Conversation-style convenings with stakeholders in their communities

Planned Outputs

- ☐ 2–3 story leads generated per convening

Planned Outcomes and Measures

- ☐ Stories distributed with ambassador program have higher-than-average share rate

Children's Book Club at Public Libraries

Planned Activities

- ☐ Crowdfund book suggestions with current audience to stage reading time event

Planned Outputs

- ☐ Set up story time at popular L.A. County library in neighborhood with lots of young children

Planned Outcomes and Measures

- ☐ Attract a crowd of at least 15 caregivers and kids. Ask for questions that they may have regarding caregiving/education

CONCLUSION

Next steps for KPCC's early childhood reporting—and beyond.



KPCC is already applying what we've learned through the human-centered design approach to other coverage areas, including our Census 2020 plans.

As the policy debates over early childhood education continue to intensify in California, it is critical that our reporting reflects the concerns of the people who are affected the most: parents and caregivers who are steeped in early childhood work. We are eager to start informing, connecting, and convening these stakeholders, especially those who are not already familiar with KPCC or NPR.

The approach we have outlined is experimental but well worth the time and effort. We are applying what we have learned to other coverage areas in our newsroom, including our Census 2020 plans. We are also excited to document our work and distribute it throughout the journalism community.

It is our hope that our successes (and, possibly, failures) will accelerate the field of learning so that public media can play a more active role in engaging new audiences.

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